Numb 98.

The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat ?

From **Friday** February 24, to **Monday** February 27, 1710.

Emilia's Day.

THIS Day let Scandal Sleep, let Old Age Dress, let Youth be Covetous, let Wit be Vain, and Ignorance be Loud, they all shall pass neglected by my Pen, and flourish unreprov'd, that they may grow up to a Harvest will crown the Mowers Soil, something of greater Moment calls upon me. It has been observ'd of late, that the sprightly *Isaac*, the Darling of the Age, from the Retentive Pedant to the Laxative Poet, encourag'd and applauded, has been Dull, even to the Melancholy Observation of the *Savoy* and *City*; and 'tis to be fear'd, from the reigning Influences of good Nature and great Complaisance, that none have been so Sincere as to give him this Account of his *Lucubrations:* I know by experience, 'tis one of the hardest Tasks can be set an Author, to write Up or Down to Himself; Immortal *Shakespear* and heavy *Banks* have err'd in this particular, to the no small Disappointment of their Admirers. When first we are admitted into the Spacious and full of Variety, the Region of Knowledge, we Address our selves to the Genius of the Place, to be instructed or diverted according to our several Inclinations and Capacities. Now if it be my Request to Climb a lofty Mountain, from whence with Pleasure and with Safety I may view the Errors and the Virtues of Human kind, is not that Guide to blame that deceives me into a Bogg, where every Step I advance carries me from my Intent, and Contaminates me with the filth of the Soil: On the other hand, if I wou'd wander peacefully and amuze my self with plucking here and there a Weed, and bestow much time in Contemplating and comparing of them when gather'd, can I do less than take it ill when I feel my Mind hurried to some unthought of Precipice, and there left a Stranger and benighted. On these Remarks I have taken it into my Head to write to the great Corrector of Absurdities and Describer of Immoralties, and tho' silent Contempt or pointed Satyr punish the Rash Thought, I shall proceed, whatever Dangers I encounter; there are more advantages in sight that I cannot miss, and which encourage me to provoke unequal Strength, such as exerted may with a Breath destroy the bubble of my Vanity, and blow me into nothing.

To Isaac Bickerstaff *Esq; Censor of* Great Britain, *&c.*

SIR,

'TO use the Language of an Ingenious Modern, I am no Propheteis, nor wou'd I be so rude to 'fortel ill luck to my Superiors; but Men in Eminent Dignity have need of a Moniter, and it is recorded of a great Monarch, That he commanded one of his Pages every Morning to Salute him with these Words when he first awak'd, *Remember, O King, that thou art Mortal!* Let this Example, Supream Censor, plead my excuse, and incline you to Pardon the Freedom *Emilia* takes, who by this you see is no Flatterer. 'Tis certain all Sublunary Things Ebb and Flow like the Waters, and tho' Authors may sometimes enjoy a Spring-Tide of *Fame*, yet Fate has hidden Sluices which in a Moment can convey the mighty Torrent to another Channel. I have in some Measure experienc'd this, who am but a Puny in Comparison with Thee; yet Destiny and Chance are allotted to the Little as well as to the Great, and the *Worm* encounters as many cross Contingencies in her humble Reptile State, as does the Tow'ring *Eagle* in all her lofty Flights thro' the wide Stretch'd Air. Suffer not the Publick Voice to exalt you too high, and teach you to despise the Methods that obtain'd it; nor let the Cares of Study depress your Mind, and level your Writings to the Taste and Understandings of *Hackney Coachmen* and *Chamber-Maids*. With the greatest Pleasure and Benefit Reading can give, I peruse your Visions, their Design, Language, and Application is Inimitable, I think you then inspir'd, and cou'd repeat them every Day with Satisfaction; but give me leave to say, that you are far more Entertaining a Sleep than Awake, and that you Dream not half so often as we wish'd and hop'd you wou'd, but rather incline us to an unprofitable Drowsiness that read you, then your Laughing Style has its Beauties, Fortunate Turns of Thought and happy Phrase; but if you design *Thursdays* of that kind, permit the meanest of your Subscribers to point out your Mistake; a Catalogue of Oaths amount but to a Scurvy Jest, and we are so distant from reforming that Vice, that your enlightned Understanding cou'd not be Ignorant that it necessitated a Hundred People to Swear execrably that Day, who thought of no such Snares in Moral Papers: Your Satyr too is Skeen, but 'tis observ'd that you are most severe upon the Faults you commit, and yet commit them on, as trifling Stories, levell'd Scandal, *&c.* All this I offer with great Humility, wishing you the Eloquence of *L'Estrange*, the Invention of Sir *William Davenant*, and the Morality of Mr *Prior*, and I the half of your Success, which will make up for the want of all those Excellencies in *Emilia*.

I had no sooner concluded my Letter, but in came my Sister *Rosella* with a City Lady, an Admirer of fashionable Wit, one that cou'd no more Smile at a Sentence

Sentence, than like a Handkerchief that was not of the newest Invention; one that Drinks Mr *Bull*'s Coffee, and Mr *Shephard*'s Tea, not out of any Regard to their Taste, but because they are well spoken of. She had no sooner seated herself in the Elbow Chair, but she begun; *Pray Mrs.* Emilia, *says she, what News do you hear, will these* French *Headcloaths take, is the Lottery full, does the Tryal come on next* Monday, *is there any Certainty of a Peace.* To all this I answer'd as Brief and as Satisfactory as possible, and then question'd in my turn, 'Pray *Madam*, how do you like the '*Female Tatler*; like it, said she, I shou'd like it well 'enough, if the Authors wou'd not be so much upon 'the Reserve: There was once Scandal sufficient to 'have pleased our end of the Town, but why shou'd 'I confine my self to that, the Court doats on Scan-'dal, and shou'd they not we shou'd quickly hold it 'in Disgrace: but of late the Authors of the *Female* '*Tatler* set up for Morality, and are as insipid as any 'thing in Print; well! this Morality is a wicked Mi-'stake in Writers, 'tis monstrous and abominable to 'pretend we want their Monitions; Mrs *Emilia* we 'want Diversion, Instruction apart for our Children, 'pray who wou'd give a Half Penny to read what 'they know already, or what they are certain they 'can never be the better for; yet if they are severe, 'tis on some general Vice, they give one very rarely 'to know who they aim at, and that is what we hate. 'I love to find an Acquaintance expos'd, or a Neigh-'bour Ridicul'd, it's not a Farthing matter whether 'they deserve it or not: There is my Intimate Mrs. '*Friendly* and her two Daughters, they are as good 'People as ever liv'd, but so awkard, that they wou'd 'make admirable Figures in the *Female Tatler*, and 'oblige the Town for two Days. Mrs. *Emilia*, if you 'know any of the Tatlers, I'll give you their Descrip-'tions; they are Creatures wou'd oblige every body 'in a Clumsy manner; they are brimful of good Na-'ture, without one Regard to Ceremony, and they'll 'entertain you a whole Afternoon with Housewif'ry 'and Family Stories: If you offer them any Snuff, 'they hold out the back of their Hands, and then make 'you Deaf with Sneezing; Coffee and Tea they count 'Slop Dawdries, but as soon as you appear, they call 'for a Tankard of Ale, and before you go 'tis Ten to 'One but they bring you a Glass of Surfeit Water: 'They know just as much of the Fashion as if they 'liv'd in *Greenland*, but very Inquisitive concerning 'Taxes. Sure, said my Sister *Rosella*, this Family con-'tributes greatly to your Mirth: O, says she, since my 'Father will still live at this odious end of the Town, '*Cheapside* had been the Death of me, but for the Plea-'sure I take in Laughing at these Dear Creatures.

By your Description, said I, I know the Originals, I Visit there sometimes, and have ever remark'd them for Sober, Hospitable Worthy Friends, Ignorant of the Vices and Guiltless of the Follies of the Town, and shou'd they read this Paper, might take an honest Pride in seeing their Pictures, even as they are drawn by your self: But thus it is, we all Laugh at one another, and believe every Thing a Folly or a Fault that differs from our own Opinions or Manners The gayest Wit, tho never so Bright, among a Company of Prudes wou'd pass but for a Ridiculous Scene, and 'twas the advice of an admirable Pen, *Not to value our selves upon our Judgments, nor flatter our selves with Reason, a brisk Buffoonry will run it down, and the false glittering of a Youthful Fancy, will turn to Ridicule our most delicate Conversations.* The Ingenious Mr. *Rose-hast* mistook his way into a Coffee-Room, dedicate to *Stock-Jobbing*, and there said Things wou'd have been set down in every Common-place Book at *Whites*, but for an unlucky Error as to Time and Company he has by all those Solemn Misunderstanding Politicians, been despised for a Shallow Half-witted Person, and made the Subject of their heavy Mirth and harmless Railing the rest of the Week. What pity it was he had not prevented their Scoffs, by taking his own infallible Rule, not to pass for a Fool in one Company, who is sure to be regarded as a *Philosopher* in another: 'Tis easie to secure our selves by sorting with equal Capacities and agreeing Opinions; but Publick Papers must share the common Fate of the Reverse: You, *Madam*, want Scandal, Another crys out of the Liberty of the Press, that dares encourage any thing of that kind; one says they are the Improvement and Diversion of the Town; others, that they are a Tax upon Publick Houses, and invented to Ruin them; A Lady assur'd me yesterday, that the *Female Tatler* was the best Paper extant, and not knowing I writ any of them, advis'd me to take them in, and this Evening another seem'd to Hint there was nothing at all in them: Who shall I believe, or which shall I oblige; 'tis the old Story of *Æsop*'s travelling Family, and I think to follow my own Measures, to do as little Mischief and as much Good as possible, and endeavour to Entertain all that are Foes to Vice and Friends to Virtue; to lash guilty Follies, and Critisize on the Failings of all who imagine themselves perfect. Here the Lady rose and took here Leave, and because I think her own Picture wou'd be more diverting than what she drew for her Friends, I intend to give it another Opportunity.

†‡† *Several Persons of Distinction, who, too powerfully influenc'd by the Moon, were qualified and designed to People Mr* Bickerstaff's *New Erected* Bedlam, *being now on these Party Animosities advanced in their* Dilirium; *he is desired to prove his Skill in speedily giving them Relief, or they will be intrusted to our Care, we having the Countess* Dowager *of* Huntington's *True Receipt, and an Hospital in View well contrived and fitted for their Reception.*

Read in our last in the Latin Motto, Speceis *for* Sparce.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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A Speedy and Perfect Cure for the Scurvy, by one Peculiar Specifick Remedy, whose Operation is safe and pleasant, causing no Sickness or hindrance of Business. Words can scarce express its transcendant and quick Effects, in eradicating that Disease, cleansing and sweetening the Blood and Humours, and freeing the Body and Skin of all impurities and defilements; as Scabs, Blotches, Spots, Itchings, &c. and that as well from Surfeits, or the Relicks of of Secret Injuries as from Scurvy, at least wise in his short Advertisement, it's Vertues are not to be compriz'd, therefore are at large set forth, with an account of the Scurvy, in a Book printed and delivered with the Medicine (the Book without the Medicine 6 d.) which is only sold by T. Spooner, at the Golden Half Moon in Lemon-street in Goodmans-field, at 3s. 6 d the Bottle, or agree for the Cure.

†‡† Marten's 6th Edition with great Additions of the Secret Disease, so plainly describing each degree and Symptom, that any one may know whether Infected or not, its Nature, Consequence, and true way of Cure, without Hazard of Reputation and Life in the Hands of Quacks and Pretenders: Illustrated with variety of Observations, Histories and Letters of remarkable Cases and Cures in both Sexes. By John Marten Surgeon, Pr. 4 s. Sold by N. Crouch in the Poultry J. Knapton in St Paul's Church-yard, P. Varennne in the Strand, and at the Authors House in Hatton Garden.

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